

News Release

**Department of the Interior / U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Southwest Louisiana National Wildlife Refuge Complex
1428 Highway 27
Bell City, LA 70665
337-598-2216**

For Immediate Release:
19 August 2014

Contact:
Diane Borden-Billiot, Visitor Services Manager
337-598-2216 office, 7:00 am – 3:30 pm

Sabine and Lacassine Teal Hunts Open September 13, Alligator Hunts will be in Progress, Fisherman Need to Avoid Hunt Areas

The Louisiana Teal season is scheduled for September 13-28, 2014. Both Sabine and Lacassine National Wildlife Refuges will open to Teal hunting Wednesday, Thursday, Saturday and Sunday throughout the season. Only approved non-toxic shot may be used.

Sabine NWR hunters may enter the refuge and launch boats no earlier than 4:00 a.m. and may not remain on the refuge later than 2 p.m. Boats may enter the refuge hunt areas from West Cove Recreation Area or through Burton Canal via Black Bayou. Central Canal Road will be open to access hunt unit E. Only vehicles without trailers are permitted on Central Canal Road and must not block traffic when parked.

Six designated shallow lakes are identified on the Sabine NWR hunt map. Lakes include: N.Backridge Lake, S. Backridge Lake, Rita Lake, Trapper Shack Lake, Old North Bayou Lake, and Burton Lake. Hunters may operate outboard motors and go-devil type or air cooled motors in these designated lakes, in addition to designated canals, bayous, and boat trails. Lakes open to boat access are shaded in gray on hunt map. Water levels may vary day to day, depending on weather and tide, and are generally only a foot or two deep, outside the main canals.

Sabine's Hunt Unit A will be closed to all users, except permitted waterfowl hunters, until 2 p.m. each day throughout the Teal season, September 13-28, 2014. Non-hunters (cast netters, crabbers, fisherman, boaters, and kayakers) are cautioned to avoid all waterfowl hunting areas during shooting hours Wednesdays, Thursdays, Saturdays, and Sundays.

Lacassine NWR hunters may enter the refuge no earlier than 4:00 a.m. and may not remain on the refuge later than 2 p.m. Hunters may hunt the portion of the refuge south of the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway and between the Mermentau River and the east bank of the Lacassine Bayou (excluding the Duck Pond area and Unit B). There is a federal

order prohibiting waterfowl hunting on a portion of Lacassine Bayou that flows through the refuge.

Waterfowl hunters are encouraged to familiarize themselves with hunting areas prior to hunting and before the fall refuge closure on October 15th. Hunt unit conditions and access may change each year depending upon weather, growth and expansion of vegetation, and tidal flow. Only portable blinds are allowed on the refuge. All boats, blinds, and decoys must be removed immediately following each days hunt.

Teal season overlaps alligator season and there will likely be active alligator sets along refuge canals, bayous, ponds, and lakes throughout waterfowl hunt areas of Sabine and Lacassine. Please avoid crossing outstretched lines that may have alligators on them as you travel. Do not tamper with any sets or lines and be aware that alligator hunters will be checking lines daily to collect their alligators.

In addition to following all Louisiana waterfowl hunting regulations, refuge hunters are required to possess a refuge-hunting permit and to turn in a completed Migratory Bird Hunt Report Form after each hunt.

The *Southwest Louisiana National Wildlife Refuge Complex Hunting Regulations 2014-15* brochure or printed online regulations will serve as the required permit when signed, dated and in your possession. Regulations and the required Hunt Report Forms may be obtained from the Visitor Center at Cameron Prairie NWR or electronically from our website at <http://www.fws.gov/swlarefugecomplex> by clicking on the Hunting Regulations link. Hard copy regulation brochures may also be obtained from Sabine NWR office, Lacassine NWR office, the Louisiana Dept. of Wildlife and Fisheries office in Lake Charles, Academy Sports and Outdoors in Lake Charles, Walmart Sporting Goods section in Sulphur, Cajun Grocery in Hayes, Gary's Landing in Lowry, Cajun Fast Mart and Fisherman's Headquarters in Carlyss, and Brown's Grocery in Hackberry while supplies last.

For additional information regarding Teal hunting on National Wildlife Refuges please call 337-598-2216.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is the principal federal agency responsible for conserving, protecting, and enhancing fish, wildlife, and plants and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people. The Service manages the 95-million-acre National Wildlife Refuge System that encompasses more than 540 national wildlife refuges, thousands of small wetlands, and other special management areas. It also operates 70 national fish hatcheries, 64 fishery resource offices and 78 ecological services field stations. The agency enforces federal wildlife laws, administers the Endangered Species Act, manages migratory bird populations, restores nationally significant fisheries, conserves and restores wildlife habitat such as wetlands, and helps foreign governments with their conservation efforts. The agency also oversees the Federal Aid program that distributes hundreds of millions of dollars in excise taxes on fishing and hunting equipment to state fish and wildlife agencies.